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BLACK FEMALE TRAINEES LEARN
ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT REPAIR SKILLS

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, GA. -- Electronic mechanical work may not be exactly a stronghold of female workers, but seven black women are claiming it as their province.

They are among a group of 34 women enrolled in the apprenticeship training program being conducted at Robins Air Force Base. The program at the base's Air Logistics Center is being conducted in accordance with U.S. Department of Labor national standards.

When the first of the women enrollees graduate from the current three-year program in 1975, they will be placed in jobs as full-fledged electronic mechanics at the Center.

Their training, both academic and on-the-job, covers all levels of airborne electronic equipment repair; i.e., disassembly, repair of parts, testing and reassembly.

A look at some of the electronic systems which they are learning to repair indicates the critical nature of their work -- navigation, fire control, electronic warefare, and guidance.

The trainees were recruited from both on and off the base. Virtually all were formerly earning less than the beginning wage in the apprenticeship program. Currently this is $3.74 per hour.

Apprentices receive a wage increase each six months, so that upon completion of the required three years of apprenticeship, they earn $5.30 per hour.

(MORE)

Although the present enrollment does not represent the first female electronic mechanic apprentices at the base, William Stapleton, chief of the maintenance training unit, says it is by far the largest single group of such trainees. There are 75 male apprentices in the program.

How are these women measuring up?

"They demonstrate a real aptitude for electronic equipment repair," says Stapleton. "Much of the work is highly delicate, and women generally have more patience than men."

# # #

BLACK UNEMPLOYMENT RATE INCREASES IN NOVEMBER

WASHINGTON -- Black workers experienced a significant increase in unemployment in November as their rate rose from 10.9 to 11.7 percent, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported.

The rate for white workers rose proportionately from 5.4 to 5.8 percent.

On a national basis, the unemployment rate rose from 6.0 percent in October to 6.5 percent in November and the number of persons with jobs declined sharply. The jobless rate was at its highest level since October 1961.

Total employment (as measured by the monthly sample survey of households) fell by nearly 800,000 in November to 85.7 million--a level approximating that of a year earlier. Until this large decline, employment had been advancing, although slowly and unevenly, throughout the year.

Nonfarm payroll employment (as measured by the monthly survey of business establishments) declined by 440,000 in November to 78.4 million. Employment reductions occurred in a number of industries, with the largest in manufacturing and retail trade. Beginning with this release, establishment data have been revised based on new benchmark levels and seasonal adjustment factors.

The number of persons unemployed reached nearly 6 million in November, up 460,000 from the previous month. Most of the increase was accounted for by workers who have lost their last jobs. Since the October 1973 low, the number of unemployed persons has risen by almost 1.9 million, and the portion of job losers among the unemployed has increased from 37 to 47 percent.

(MORE)

BLACK NEWS DIGEST - 12/16/74

After moving down to the 3 1/2-year low of 4.6 percent in October 1973, the Nation's unemployment rate has risen almost 2 full percentage points. A small part of this increase took place last winter during the energy crisis, but the bulk occurred since June. Over this 5-month span, the rate of joblessness has moved from 5.2 percent to the present level of 6.5 percent.

Although the November increase in unemployment was widespread, adult women (20 years and over) were especially affected, their rate rising a full percentage point over the month to 6.6 percent. The jobless rate for adult men also rose, from 4.3 to 4.6 percent. Within the adult group, those 20-24 years of age were particularly hard hit by rising joblessness. In contrast, at 17.3 percent, the rate for teenagers was little changed from October.

Jobless rates for household heads and married men moved up to 3.9 and 3.3 percent, respectively, while the rate for full-time workers rose to 6.2 percent. All of these groups have posted large increases in unemployment over year-earlier levels.

The jobless rate for workers covered by State unemployment insurance programs increased to 4.3 percent, up from 3.6 percent in October and 2.6 percent in November 1973. The 2.8 million unemployment insurance claimants under state programs now account for close to half of the total jobless.

Among the major occupational groups, sizeable upswings in unemployment were registered among blue-collar workers, particularly operatives (many of whom are assembly-line workers). There were also jobless increases among white-collar workers. Manufacturing workers in both durable and nondurable

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goods industries and construction workers experienced the sharpest rises in joblessness among the major industry categories. The manufacturing rate at 7.3 percent in November, compares with an October 1973 low of 3.9 percent; the construction rate reached 13.9 percent, its highest level since 1963.

The unemployment rate for Vietnam-era veterans 20-34 years old, at 5.8 percent in November, was about unchanged from the previous month, remaining substantially below the rate for nonveterans, which increased to 7.4 percent. However, the youngest veterans (those 20 to 24 years old) continued to experience a higher incidence of unemployment than nonveterans of the same age. The young veterans' rate was 12.4 percent, compared with 9.9 percent for young nonveterans.

The civilian labor force declined by 320,000 in November to 91.7 million (seasonally adjusted). Over the past 12 months, the labor force has risen by 1.7 million, in marked contrast to a 2.9 million gain over the prior year.

The number of persons employed declined by 790,000 in November. Employment reductions were spread among the three major age-sex groups; occupationally, the most severe cutbacks took place among blue-collar and service workers. Total employment was about unchanged from last November.

The number of workers employed part time for economic reasons--those who want full-time jobs but are forced to work shorter hours due to such factors as material shortages, slack work, or the inability to find full-time work--rose 290,000 in November to 3.2 million.

Nonagricultural payroll employment declined by 440,000 in November to a seasonally adjusted level of 78.4 million. Large employment drops

(MORE)

in manufacturing and retail trade overwhelmed moderate increases in services and State and local government.

In manufacturing, where employment fell by 350,000, declines occurred in virtually every industry in both the durable and nondurable goods sectors.

Over the past year, nonfarm payroll employment rose by 460,000, but this upward movement masked contrasting trends in the goods- and service-producing sectors of the economy. Whereas the service-producing industries rose by nearly 1.4 million since last November, the goods industries experienced declines totaling over 900,000. Within the goods industries, factory employment was down 700,000 and contract construction 250,000.

# # #

MAHLON T. PURYEAR OF URBAN LEAGUE
NAMED TO UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ADVISORY COUNCIL

WASHINGTON -- Mahlon T. Puryear, director of economic development for the Urban League, New York City, has been named to the Federal Advisory Council on Unemployment Insurance.

Puryear, a well-known black leader in industrial education and manpower programs, was one of six members sworn in by Secretary of Labor Peter J. Brennan during a special one-day meeting held recently to discuss legislative improvements in the federal-state unemployment insurance program.

The other new members are:

-- Dr. Carolyn Shaw Bell, Katharine Coman Professor of Economics, Wellesley College, Mass., and a scholar in consumerism, social security, and employment areas.

-- Robert W. Macfarlane, an electrician, President of the Idaho State AFL-CIO and a member of the Idaho State Advisory Council.

-- David A. Sweeney, Legislative and Political Director, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Warehousemen, and Helpers of America, Washington, D.C.

-- R. V. Thornton, Executive Vice President, Grower-Shipper Vegetable Association, Salinas, Calif., and a lawyer with insurance and agricultural employment experience.

-- Guy W. Nichols, President and Chief Executive Officer, New England Electric System, Westborough, Mass.

In addition to the new appointments, two members were reappointed to the Council by Secretary Brennan. They are:

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-- Ken Morris, Director of the Detroit region of the United Automobile Workers; and

-- Samuel E. Dyer, Operating Vice President, Tax Department, Federated Department Stores, Cincinnati, Ohio, and Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce UI Committee.

The remaining seven members of the Council are:

-- Fr. Joseph M. Becker, S.J., Research Associate for Social Studies, Georgetown University, Washington, D. C.

-- Edward L. Cushman, Executive Vice President, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan.

-- Austin E. Kerby, Director, National Economic Commission, The American Legion, Washington, D. C.

-- John W. Bowden, President, Building and Construction Trades Council, Jacksonville, Florida.

-- James O'Brien, Assistant Director, Department of Social Security, AFL-CIO, Washington, D. C.

-- Henry H. Chase, Public Affairs Representative, Exxon Company, Houston, Texas.

-- Joseph L. Peterson, Director of Administration, McDonnell Douglas Astronautics Co., Huntington Beach, California.

The Federal Advisory Council on Unemployment Insurance was established by Public Law 91-373 to "review the Federal-State UI program and make recommendations to the Secretary of Labor on its improvement."

BRENNAN URGES IMMEDIATE PASSAGE
OF EMERGENCY JOBLESS MEASURES

WASHINGTON -- Secretary of Labor Peter J. Brennan said that there is "crucial need now" for Congressional passage of the emergency measures proposed by President Ford to "soften the blow of unemployment."

In remarks before a meeting of the Federal Advisory Council on Unemployment Insurance in Washington, D.C., Secretary Brennan said unemployed workers "cannot wait long to eat or to pay the rent. Help is needed now."

Brennan urged passage of the President's plan -- the National Employment Assistance Act -- to provide:

-- Temporary additional income for unemployed workers who have exhausted their present unemployment benefits or who currently are not eligible for such benefits, and

-- An expanded public employment program to give jobs to many who need them. These jobs would augment important community services.

On Dec. 2, President Ford again asked Congress to give jobless workers up to 13 weeks of benefits in addition to their regular unemployment compensation. Workers normally now eligible for any unemployment compensation would get up to 26 weeks of benefits.

The President is also seeking a level of public service employment well above the 170,000 public service jobs funded earlier this year, Brennan pointed out.

Both programs would be activated in areas of high unemployment if the national unemployment rate averages 6 percent or more for three straight months.

"As I see it," Brennan said, "we cannot afford to delay passing this legislation any longer. There is crucial need now for the relief it provides."

If the President's emergency jobless measure were already adopted, he said, "we could right now begin speeding help to the nation's workers..."

# # #

OSHA ADDS OMITTED RESPIRATORS TO
VINYL CHLORIDE JOB HEALTH RULE

WASHINGTON -- Certain supplied air respirators, inadvertently omitted from a permanent job health rule issued Oct. 4, 1974, have been added by the U.S. Labor Department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to protect workers from the cancer-causing properties of vinyl chloride.

Assistant Secretary of Labor John H. Stender said correction of the Oct. 4 standard "by including the most commonly-used (Type C) supplied air respirator will help alleviate the industry's problem of protecting workers."

The Type C supplied air respirator may be used in workplaces containing no more than 1,000 parts of vinyl chloride per million parts of air.

The OSHA rule sets as a goal the limiting of workplace levels of vinyl chloride to no more than one part per million (ppm) in air averaged over any eight-hour period, with temporary levels of no more than five ppm averaged over any 15-minute period. Until Jan. 1, 1976, however, where employers have been unable to lower levels to concentrations no greater than 25 ppm over any 15-minute period, employees may decide whether to wear respirators that employers must provide. After that date, respirators must be worn wherever levels exceed the OSHA limits of one ppm over an eight-hour period or five ppm over a 15-minute period.

The OSHA rule prescribes various means of respiratory protection for various exposure levels and now includes "type C supplied air respirators, continuous flow type, with full or half facepiece, helmet or hood for exposure not over 1,000 ppm," as well.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) also is expected to test and certify an air purifying respirator before Jan. 1, 1976.

Notice of the addition, and of various other minor corrections, appeared in the Federal Register Dec. 3.

# # #

DELURY STRESSES NEED FOR STRONG
FEDERAL-STATE EFFORT IN ENFORCING LABOR LAWS

WASHINGTON -- Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employment Standards Bernard E. DeLury called for improved communication and cooperation between federal, state and local government in enforcing worker-protection laws.

Speaking before the International Association of Government Labor Officials in Washington, D.C., DeLury said, "I have a strong commitment to increasing your understanding of wage and hour, workers' compensation, and other labor laws--laws that improve working conditions for millions of Americans."

He told the group that the 10 regional offices of the Employment Standards Administration (ESA) will work closely with state labor officials to share information on ESA policies, enforcement activities, and other vital issues.

"By working together," DeLury said, "we are better equipped to make the intent of these laws a reality."

# # #

Week of December 16, 1974

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6,435 JOB SAFETY, HEALTH INSPECTIONS CONDUCTED BY OSHA IN SEPTEMBER

WASHINGTON -- The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) conducted 6,435 inspections during Sept. 1974, the U.S. Department of Labor reported.

This brings to nearly 180,000 the total number of job safety and health inspections since OSHA's inception.

In Sept. 1974, OSHA issued to employers 4,306 citations alleging 23,681 violations of job safety and health standards. Proposed penalties totaled $604,296.

Since April 28, 1971, through September 1974, OSHA made 178,641 inspections resulting in 119,343 citations alleging 616,374 violations, with proposed penalties totaling $15,492,634. Of that amount, $11,311,290 has been remitted to the Secretary of the Treasury. The balance represents funds not yet collected, plus penalties proposed by OSHA that were reduced or vacated by order of the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission after employer appeals.

# # #

OSHA CONSTRUCTION SAFETY AND HEALTH PANEL TO MEET JAN. 7-10

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Department of Labor's Advisory Committee on Construction Safety and Health will meet Tuesday through Friday, Jan. 7-10 to continue developing recommendations for improving on-the-job conditions for construction workers.

During the meeting, open to the public, the committee will continue selecting those general industry job safety and health rules that should be incorporated into rules applying solely to construction work.

The meeting begins at 9 a.m. in the Chinese Room, Mayflower Hotel, 1127 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C.

Written data and requests to present oral testimony concerning the agenda topic must be submitted in 20 copies each by Dec. 31, to the Committee Management Office, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), U.S. Department of Labor, Room 200-MNWA, 1726 M St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20210. Requests to appear should include the name and address of the persons wishing to appear, the capacity in which they will appear, a summary of their presentation and time needed.

Notice of the meeting appeared in the Federal Register Nov. 29.

# # #

Dear Consumer

New Law Assures Credit for Women

By Virginia Knauer
Special Assistant to the President
and Director
Office of Consumer Affairs
Department of Health, Education and Welfare

Are you a working woman who handles her income wisely and who needs—or wants—credit? You can now be assured that your application for credit will probably be approved.

Under a new Federal law, the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, women may no longer be denied credit simply because they are women. As of October 28, 1975—when the new law becomes effective—sex discrimination will be banned in the granting of credit. However, I hope that many progressive stores will not wait that long to give women their due credit.

The law does not mean that stores and lending institutions must give charge accounts, credit cards and loans to every woman who fills out an application. What it does mean is that women applying for credit must be judged by the same standards used for men: a steady income, prompt payment of bills, a regular savings record, cautious use of credit.

This new law gives women protection they have long needed. Several years ago, during hearings of the National Commission on Consumer Finance, it became clear that women were often turned down for credit only because they were women.

At the hearings, a widow described how she was refused charge accounts in her own name, though she could get accounts in her dead husband's name. A 40-year-old divorced woman with a full-time job needed her retired father to co-sign with her so she could get a mortgage loan.

Fortunately, women will never again face such discrimination.

But women—like men—do have a responsibility to show that they can handle credit cautiously. Never borrow more than you can comfortably repay, on a regular monthly basis. Never open more charge accounts than you can handle. Don't ever let yourself get in over your head when it comes to credit. You would face problems if you were ever turned down for credit on the ground that your credit rating is bad.

Keep that in mind as you consider these suggestions:

- Open a savings account and a checking account in your own name.

Married women often neglect this, but it is useful in helping you to establish your credit standing.

- If you are ever refused credit, find out whether the reason is that you have a poor credit rating.

Whenever you apply for credit, a report on your credit standing is prepared, usually by a credit reporting company. Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, you have the right to learn the name and address of the credit reporting company that put together the report on you. Contact that company—they must tell you what information went into the report.

- If the data in the report is accurate, and if you were turned down because you actually do have a poor credit rating, get some help.

Talk with the credit manager at the credit reporting company. Ask for suggestions on what you can do to establish a sound credit rating.

- However, if the data in your credit report is inaccurate, take action.

The law sets up ways for you to remedy the situation if a false credit report has been filed against you. Learn your rights by getting **Consumer Bulletin No. 7** from Federal Trade Commission, Legal and Public Records, Washington, D.C. 20509. It's free.

- Take action, also, if you are turned down for credit even though you do have a good credit rating.

Since the Equal Credit Opportunity Act does not become effective until Oct. 1975, it will take time for some stores and lenders to change their old ways of granting credit. If you encounter situations which you think may involve sex discrimination, contact the U.S. Attorney for your district. You will probably find the U.S. Attorney's office in your phone directory, under Department of Justice, in the U.S. Government listings. If there is no such listing in your directory, ask your local post office to help locate the U.S. Attorney for your district.

FILLERS FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

The first state law fixing 10 hours as a legal workday was passed in New Hampshire in 1847, according to the U.S. Labor Department's "A Brief History of the American Labor Movement."

# # #

Samuel Gompers, first president of the American Federation of Labor, died on Dec. 13, 1924.

# # #

President Kennedy established a 21-member Advisory Committee on Labor-Management Policy in 1961 to make recommendations that might promote industrial peace and sound wage and price policies, according to a U.S. Labor Department publication.

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Philadelphia carpenters struck unsuccessfully for a 10-hour day and additional pay for overtime in 1971, the first recorded strike of workers in the building trades, according to the U.S. Labor Department's "A Brief History of the American Labor Movement."

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